

Riverside County Children and Families Commission



Strategic Plan

2000 to 2005

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A Public Entity

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MISSION

Riverside County Children and Families Commission provides support for all children, prenatal to 5 years, and their families to improve early childhood development.

VISION

Riverside County leads the State in implementing comprehensive, integrated systems for children to thrive in supportive, nurturing and loving environments, enter school healthy and ready to learn, and become productive, well-adjusted members of society.

VALUES

- ◆ Literacy
- ◆ A safe and healthy, loving, nurturing environment for children.
- ◆ Measurable quality services that are accessible, affordable, sustainable.
- ◆ Commitment to provide collaborative, integrated services built on the strengths of Riverside County.
- ◆ One community: value and respect diversity regardless of culture, social, and economic status or abilities.

GOALS

Information and referral system: Create a comprehensive information and referral system for families and providers.

Child care: Expand the availability of quality, accessible and affordable child care services that link to affordable health services, child and family education resources, and the information and referral system.

Health: Foster a healthy community and provide access to affordable, comprehensive and preventive health services.

Education: Expand the availability of literacy programs, early childhood development to all families and increase the number and accessibility of programs to ensure children are ready for school.

Master Plan: Encourage the development of a master plan to support families so that their children are healthy and successful in school.

II. Introduction

Purpose

The purpose of this document is to:

- ◆ comply with Health and Safety code Section 130140(a) (1) (C), and,
- ◆ develop a countywide plan to support and improve early childhood health and development.

In this document are strategic planning components including:

1. *A description of the goals and objectives proposed to be attained;* (pages 9 through 18)
2. *A description of the programs, services and projects proposed to be provided, sponsored or facilitated;* (pages 9 through 18)
3. *A description of how measurable outcomes of such programs, services and projects will be determined by the County Commission using appropriate reliable indicators* (page 4); and
4. *A description of how programs, services and projects relating to early childhood development within the county will be integrated into a consumer-oriented and easily accessible system* (page 5) [Health and Safety code section 130140 (1) (C) (ii)].

Background

In November 1998, California voters passed Proposition 10 a ballot initiative that added a 50 cents tax per pack of cigarettes. This tax will be declining source of revenue as fewer people smoke. In 1999 this tax has generated \$24 million dollars for Riverside County. Proposition 10 (Health and Safety Code section 130100 et. seq.) requires these funds to be spent for “promoting supporting, and improving the early development of children from the prenatal stage to five years of age. These purposes shall be accomplished through the establishment, institution and coordination of the appropriate standards, resources, and integrated and comprehensive programs, emphasizing community awareness, education, nurturing, and child care, social services, health care and research.” “It is the intent of this act to facilitate the creation and implementation of an integrated comprehensive and collaborative system of information and services to enhance optimal early childhood development. This system should function as a network

that promotes accessibility to all information and services from any entry point into the system.” [Health and Safety code Section 130100 (a) and (b)]. It is estimated that Proposition 10 will generate \$537 million in 1999-2000.

Eighty percent of the revenues are passed through to County Commissions. Riverside County's portion is expected to \$24 million. The other 20 percent of the total revenues must be distributed as follows:

- Six percent for a media campaign on topics related to early childhood development, the impact of secondhand smoke on children, and the prevention of smoking and alcohol and drug use by pregnant women;
- Five percent for development of educational materials, technical support for county commissions, and parental and professional education and training;
- Three percent for education and training of child care providers;
- Three percent for research and development of "best practices," establishing standards for early childhood development programs, and program evaluation;
- Two percent for allocation to any program furthering the purpose of the initiative, other than administration of the state commission; and
- One percent for administration of the state commission.

Riverside County, with 7,200 square miles, is geographically the fourth largest county in the State. The population is estimated to be 1.4 million. There are an estimated 162,000 children from 0-5 years old with more than 23,000 births each year. Twenty six percent of families living in poverty have a child under 5 years old. Proposition 10 funds provide an opportunity for Riverside County to create a collaborative environment fostering optimal child development opportunities for all children consistent with recent early brain development research.

Process

The development of a plan for the use of Proposition 10 funds in Riverside County began in March 1999 with monthly meetings of the Riverside Children and Family Commission (Commission). A portion of each meeting was dedicated to public

input. A thirteen-member Advisory Committee representing the community began conducting monthly meetings July 1999.

The Riverside Advisory Committee conducted eleven public forums throughout the County from August through October 1999. More than 230 people attended the forums to recommend how the Proposition 10 funds should be spent in their communities. Summaries of each meeting were shared with all Advisory and Commission members.

On November 5, 6 and 7, 1999 The Commission held a Strategic Planning session. More than 90 people participated in this 2½-day planning process as the basis for creating a 5-year plan for the use of Prop 10 moneys. Once the Strategic Plan was drafted four additional public forums were held to share the proposed Plan with communities throughout the County. On January 31, 2000 a public hearing was conducted for the purpose of receiving final public input to the 2000 Strategic Plan for use of Proposition 10 funds. After final refinement of the Strategic Plan, the Strategic Plan was formally adopted by the Commission and submitted to the State Children and Families Commission.

Opportunities and Challenges

The 2-½ day strategic planning process created an excitement among all participants about the support provided by Proposition 10 funding. Universally all participants agreed for the need to:

- ◆ build on existing resources and services
- ◆ leverage the money
- ◆ share facilities and skills
- ◆ build public/private partnerships
- ◆ celebrate the diversity we have
- ◆ focus on the whole child

The major challenge that was identified was the lack of transportation including the lack of fixed route transportation services in many areas of the County.

Measurable Outcomes

Key System Indicators: The County of Riverside Children and Families Commission has selected 28 Key System Indicators to determine the overall success of Proposition 10 fund usage. These indicators focus on the 5 goals identified by the Commission and are located on pages 8 through 17. These high level indicators will be used by the Commission to review overall program findings, evaluate funding options and set priorities on an annual basis.

Program, Services and Project Outcomes: The Commission will require each program, service and project linked with Proposition 10 to identify measures that:

1. Show correlation to the Commission's goals, objectives and key system indicators;
2. Are direct outcome measures of each proposed program, service and project as well as in-process measures;
3. Measure customer satisfaction including consumer-orientation and accessibility;
4. Measure integration of services and collaboration; and,
5. Verify maximum leveraging of Proposition 10 funds.

The above measurement requirements will be reviewed by the Commission prior to the disbursement of funds. In addition, each program, service and project will annually provide evidence of compliance with predetermined targets for each of their measures.

Progress Report: The Commission will develop a comprehensive progress report annually designed to make analysis and comparison of system wide data easy.

Consumer-Oriented and Easily Accessible System

The Commission will utilize Proposition 10 funds to encourage the development of a system of linked services and supports designed to foster early childhood development. This system will be characterized by:

- ◆ Easy and open access to services
- ◆ Ease in referral and access to information
- ◆ Collaboration using private and public agencies, and
- ◆ Support for healthy communities

The Commission will require each program, service and project to show measurable results in consumer-orientation and accessibility as well as service integration and collaboration. The Commission will develop an index of these measures to determine continual improvement in these important areas. This index will represent a compilation of results from all programs, services and projects to show systemwide improvement for the Commission to evaluate overall progress from year to year.

Allocation of Proposition 10 Funds

Distribution of Proposition 10 funds will be based on competitive processes. There will be an immediate, short-term competitive application solicitation for programs with a proven track record. Programs given funds at this time will be required to show direct correlation to the Commission's 10 goals, objectives and key indicators and be able to provide outcome data that will help the Commission meet the 28 key system indicators identified in this document.

After March 7, 2000 the Commission will conduct a long-range competitive process relative to the stated goals and objectives. In addition to supporting the goals, objectives and key system indicators, applicants will be evaluated on:

- 1) their ability to maximize funds through leveraging,
- 2) innovation and creativity

- 3) customer-orientation
- 4) easy-access including people with disabilities
- 5) cultural adaptation
- 6) integration with all aspects of the developing children and families system

The Commission must also balance fund distribution between the specified goals and all people of Riverside County. Qualified projects may not be funded in an area where the greatest need is another priority.

Investment of Proposition 10 funds: Knowing these moneys are a declining source of revenue and that proposed program costs will likely increase over time, the Commission will invest a percentage of funds each year to maximize the future benefits.

Proposition 10 Administration

Facilitation and maximization of the use of Proposition 10 moneys will require ongoing administrative support. The Commission will minimize the use of Proposition 10 funds for systemwide administration carefully reviewing the purpose and performance of these expenses. To that end, systemwide administration goals, objectives, and outcome measures will be developed and reported regularly regarding services. Examples of outcome measures include:

- 1) Percentage of children in receiving services in recognized Children and Family first collaboratives.
- 2) Percentage of Proposition 10 funds that are leveraged.
- 3) Number of state and federal legislation issues supported to meet the identified needs of the children prenatal to 5 in Riverside County.
- 4) Number of key system indicators and program measure targets met.

Strategic Plan Review

The Commission recognizes that the Strategic Plan is a living document and anticipates as more information becomes available aspects of the current plan will be revised. A public hearing will be conducted whenever changes to this document are proposed.

III. Goals and Objectives

Information and Referral System Goal

GOAL	OBJECTIVES	KEY SYSTEM INDICATORS
Create a comprehensive information and referral system accessible to all families and service providers.	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Establish a research component to monitor successes and determine best practices by January 2001. 2. Develop and implement a comprehensive referral system for early childhood services by January 2004. 3. Develop and implement a system to share data and resource information countywide by October 2005. 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1.1 Provide an annual comprehensive report on the status of the plan beginning January 2001. 2.1 Number of referrals made through the referral system. 2.2 Number of referrals consummated. 3.1 Number of children 0-5 tracked by the data system. 3.2 Number of organizations linked to the data system.

Programs, Services and Projects:

The Commission recognizes the need to provide easy access to information, services and eligibility data for the numerous programs required to improve early childhood development to maximize effectiveness. Technology is available to assist organizations tracking this large population and preventing inappropriate duplication of services. A plan to link organizations and share data is a priority as is maintaining confidentiality.

During the public forums as well as at the Strategic Planning session, it was apparent that many services available within Riverside County are not well known by the agencies and individuals providing referrals. Some programs have eligibility requirements others do not. There is no comprehensive system to access the services available. Technology may be one answer. The Commission

will work to develop and implement a comprehensive, easily accessible referral system for 0 to 5-year-old children.

With the number of programs working toward the improvement of early childhood development, the Commission wants to identify those organizations that are models and share the information. We know that there are creative and effective programs in Riverside County that should be models for the County and the nation. By monitoring Proposition 10 outcomes, we expect to identify best practices and share the learnings.

Child Care Goal

GOAL	OBJECTIVES	KEY SYSTEM INDICATORS
Expand the availability of quality, accessible and affordable child care services.	<p>1. Increase quality child care resources for infant and toddlers (0-2) by 10% per year beginning December 2001.</p> <p>2. Increase quality child care resources for all children by 10% per year beginning December 2003.</p> <p>3. Create 4 child care programs (one in each of the child care consortium areas) that link affordable health services, child and family education resources, and information and referral systems, and determine the feasibility and if appropriate implement "one-stop" service hubs with multiple resources by December 2002.</p> <p>4. Increase the number of child care spaces with non-traditional hours and days of service by 10% by December 2002.</p>	<p>1.1 Number of licensed child care spaces for infants and toddlers with a passing ECERS (Early Childhood Environment Rating Scale) score.</p> <p>2.1 Number of total licensed child care spaces with a passing ECERS score.</p> <p>2.2 Ratio of children needing services to spaces available for: Infants and toddlers (0-2 years old) and preschoolers.</p> <p>3.1 Number of child care programs per child care consortium area linking affordable health service, child and family education resources, and information and referral systems.</p> <p>3.2 Feasibility and implementation plan for "one-stop" service hubs.</p> <p>4.1 Number of child care spaces with non-traditional hours.</p>

Programs, Services, Projects:

Parents are clear that one of their top priorities is child care. Because of the huge disparity between the 21,000 infants and toddlers needing child care and the meager 1,446 spaces countywide, the Commission will initially focus their child care efforts on infant and toddler care. Another area of focus that will increase capacity immediately is to extend hours/days of operation in existing child care sites to meet the need for non-traditional evening and week-end care.

Additional projects that will be sponsored are:

- 1) incentives to existing and prospective child care professionals to seek education and training to enhance their skills;
- 2) training and financial assistance to unlicensed child care providers to become licensed;
- 3) incentives to parents for use of quality child care services;
- 4) expansion of high quality child care and early education programs for children with special needs, in natural environments, including children with emotional and behavioral challenges; and,
- 5) incentives to employers to assist employees with child care needs.

The California Department of Social Service County and the California Department of Education (1998) has identified Riverside County as one of twenty-five counties in the state with the greatest need to increase the supply of child care. There is over 162,000 children birth to five years of age residing in the county, yet there are only 25,000 licensed child care spaces. With the implementation of Welfare Reform, the situation has become even more critical. Families need immediate access to child care services when jobs are offered. The lack of child care programs in Riverside County is forcing families to make less than appropriate child care decisions.

A potential model to address the needs of more than 75% of parents in Riverside County who work outside of the county is a “one-stop” or hub model child care facility. This would provide a multiple service center that includes parenting education, health and mental health services, social services and literacy programs.

Health Goal

GOAL	OBJECTIVES	KEY SYSTEM INDICATORS
Foster a healthy community and provide access to affordable, comprehensive and preventive mental and physical health services.	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> Beginning December 2000 increase the number of families with children 0-5 covered by insurance or sponsored health programs by 10% per year. Reach a 90% immunization rate for 2-year-old children by December 2005. Incorporate a comprehensive screening for developmental and emotional problems into routine health care for children by March 2001. Implementation of a universal home visitation program by December 2001. Ninety percent of children 0-5 will be serviced by fluoridated water by December 2005. 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> Number and percent of families with children 0-5 covered by insurance or sponsored health programs. Number and percent of families with children 0-5 not accessing health services. Immunization rate for 2-year-old children. Infant mortality rate. Low birth weight. Teen pregnancy rate. Percentage of children in Riverside County living in poverty. Percentage of children referred to Child Protective Services, Regional Center, and mental health services. Percent of families of live births receiving one home visit. Percent of children 0-5 serviced by fluoridated water.

Programs, Services and Projects:

Statistics show those families eligible for MediCal and Healthy Families are not utilizing these resources. One of the Commission's health care priorities is to enroll families in these programs.

All children starting school are required to be immunized. Only 69% of the 2-year olds in Riverside County have received all their immunizations. With additional resources, programs are in place that could improve the immunization rate of children up to age two.

There are a small percentage of eligible and non-eligible families and individuals that are not accessing health care services. The Commission is committed to identify mechanisms to reach out to these people and provide appropriate health services. Additionally for those who do access basic health care it is essential that specialized problems like mental health, vision, dental and prenatal care is identified and appropriate referrals be made.

The Commission will utilize funds to implement a universal home visit program for all families of live births in Riverside County. Each family will be offered at least one visit where a basic assessment will be made. Families identified during the assessment as high risk will be offered comprehensive home services (the Olds model or other model), to assist the parents with health, education and child care issues.

Another focus for use of the funds will be a holistic approach to healthy communities through the provision of health education to parents and families including prenatal care, drug/alcohol and tobacco use, safety, nutrition, mental health, and breastfeeding.

Particularly in health care service delivery, the Commission will give special consideration for leveraging Proposition 10 dollars.

Education Goal

GOAL	OBJECTIVES	KEY SYSTEM INDICATORS
Educate Riverside County residents regarding the life long implication of optimal development to age 5.	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. By December 2005, 50% of all parents of children 0-5 will have participated in parenting education activities. 2. By December 2005, 50% of all child care providers will have successfully completed an approved early childhood training program. 3. By December 2005, increase the number of affordable, full-day preschool spaces by 30%. 4. By December 2005, 50% of families will have participated in an early literacy training activity. 5. Identify common-focused education campaigns and implement countywide education by June 2000. 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1.1 Number/percentage of parents 0-5 who have participated in a parenting education activity. 2.1 Percentage of child care providers successfully completing an approved early childhood training program. 3.1 Number of affordable, full-day preschool spaces. 3.2 Percentage of 3-4 year old children participating in a preschool program. 4.1 Number of children who demonstrate reading readiness upon entering the first grade. 5.1 Number of education campaigns initiated.

Programs, Services and Projects:

The Commission's education priority is to create a population that is ready to learn. Parents and others who regularly interact with children must be trained about the benefits of early childhood education as referenced in recently published brain research documents. [Reference: California Children and Families Commission Prop. 10 Guidelines: A Resource for Developing Prop. 10 Strategic

Plans; September 16, 1999.] The Commission will help develop and provide early childhood information and materials that are easy to use and culturally appropriate. They will utilize existing programs (i.e. Head Start, faith community, Mommy and Me Playtime, libraries, Gymboree, parents, teachers, and child care providers), for distribution and training. Emphasis will be on the 0 to 18 month-old children. The Commission will consider incentives such as financial support for parents for participation in these training programs.

For child care and preschool providers to educate parents and provide state of the art care for Riverside's children, child care providers must be trained. Scholarships, grants and other incentives will be considered to encourage training of child care providers.

Other education priorities are family life education to teens and future parents, prenatal education and family literacy.

With the knowledge that preparation for learning prior to attending kindergarten is important, the Commission is dedicated to expanding preschool programs for 3 and 4 year olds. Several models are in place in the County and using these models and/or expanding the capacities to increase the space for this age group is an early objective.

The Commission recognizes the sensitivity of using Proposition 10 funds for education through the media. It also realizes that to educate the public about the importance of early childhood development, the media will be one of the most valuable resources. The Commission will carefully coordinate with the State Children and Families Commission, other counties and local providers to maximize the use of the media as a tool to educate parents and families about the value of early childhood development.

Master Plan Goal

GOAL	OBJECTIVES	KEY SYSTEM INDICATORS
Encourage the development of a master plan to support families so that their children are healthy and successful in school.	1. Participate in a comprehensive planning process for children 0 -18 years of age focusing on the children in the 0-5 age group by January 2002.	1.1 Implementation of a publicly supported 10-year master plan that includes children 0-5 years old has system accountability measures.

Programs, Services, and Projects:

The Commission believes that most of the services and skills necessary for improving early childhood development currently exist in the County. There is no comprehensive assessment of these resources and no plan for expansion, collaboration and sharing of skills. The Commission will work with other agencies the development of a master plan with these services to maximize the benefits for all children focusing on those special needs of the 0-5 age group.

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Proposition 10

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